

# **Establishing and Implementing a Community Development Strategy Town of Adams**



# Town of Adams Overview

- Tremendous losses in manufacturing base
- No participation in the Berkshire cultural tourism economy
- Declining population of 9,000 (1970 – 13,500)
- Over 58% low-moderate income
- Deteriorated building stock: 83% of housing stock in downtown predates 1920
- Town's economic development strategy dominated by Greylock Glen

## ***Adams Downtown Development Plan***

- Previous Visioning Efforts
- Building on strengths – historic building stock, well-defined town center, and outdoor recreation
- Ashuwillticook Rail Trail
- Mount Greylock & Greylock Glen
- Broader Community Development Issues:
  - Upgrades needed to schools and parks
  - New market-rate housing needed for balanced community
  - Support small business development & growth

# ***Adams Downtown Development Plan***

Plan's key strategies , include:

- Eliminating blighting conditions;
- Strengthening existing businesses and recruiting new, appropriate businesses to the Downtown;
- Improving physical design of Downtown to promote and enhance tourist-based economic development opportunities.

## **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Town of Adams, MA



**Chan Krieger & Associates** Planning and Architecture

**Reed Hilderbrand** Landscape Architecture

**GLC Development Resources** Economic Development

**July 2003**

# Elimination of Slums & Blight

- Building stock old and deteriorated - over 83% of all structures in downtown built prior to 1920
- Findings of *2002 Slums & Blight Inventory*:
  - 75% of commercial/mixed-use buildings in poor condition
  - 72% of residential structures in poor condition
  - 85% infrastructure in poor condition
- Building owners one of biggest impediments to downtown revitalization

# Tools to Eliminate Slums & Blight

- Key Individual Projects (Armory Court, Jones Block Redevelopment, Hinge Block Parking, etc.) - Funding Sources: CDBG; CDAG; PWED; and Private
- *Adams Downtown Façade & Signage Improvement Program* - Sources: CDBG; Private
- *Adams Housing Rehabilitation Program* - Sources: CDBG; Get the Lead Out; Private
- Improved Code Enforcement (New rental housing inspection program, Full-time Code Enforcement Officer) Source: Town funds



# Armory Court Improvement Project

## Armory Court - Before



# Armory Court Improvement Project

Armory Court - After





# Jones Block Redevelopment Project



# ***Adams Downtown Façade & Signage Improvement Program***

Before



After





# ***Adams Downtown Façade & Signage Improvement Program***

Before



After



# ***Adams Downtown Façade & Signage Improvement Program***

Before



After





## ***Adams Housing Rehabilitation Program***

- On-going Program
- Adams Housing Rehab Program (> 280 units over past 15 yrs)
- Targeted approach – both neighborhood and project
- Combined w/Façade Improvement Program, other efforts for more comprehensive results

## **Projects Enhancing Tourist-based Economic Development**

- Ashuwillticook Rail Trail
- Adams Visitors Center
- Armory Court “Pocket” Park
- Topia Arts Center
- Wayfinding & Banners Program
- Streetscape Improvements - Summer Street & Park Street

# Ashuwillticook Rail Trail

## Adams Visitors Center





# Armory Court Park





# Streetscape Improvements



## Other Community Projects

- Renfrew Park (regional playing fields/park)

Funding Sources: Urban Self-Help (PARC), CDBG, & Town funds

- Restoration of Maple Street Cemetery (Urban Self-Help funding)
- Plunkett Hospital Housing (Town subsidy; private funds)
- Greylock Glen Infrastructure (MassWorks)
- Route 8/Friend Street Intersection Improvements (State/federal transportation funds)

## **Additional Tools & Funding Sources**

- Local funds used for:
  - Architectural studies
  - Project master plans
  - Engineering assessments, condition surveys
  - Appraisals
- Brownfields funding used for:
  - Environmental Site Assessments
  - Hazardous Building Materials Surveys

## Conclusion

- Limited Town funds able to leverage significant state/federal grant resources & private investment
- Targeted approach realizes big dividends
- Town's strategy kept current/reinforced by BOS Strategic Plan; CD Strategy (CDBG)
- Exploit in-house and RPA resources to enhance CD staff capacity
- Downtown approach useful in other areas of Town